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*R. Letterson*

Mr. Harmon McAlister  
Council for Tobacco Research  
900 Third Ave.  
New York, N.Y. 10022  
May 2, 1990

Dear Mr. McAlister:

A colleague of mine, Dr. Ulla Hansen of the Dana Farber Cancer Institute, recently informed me that your organization has funds available for basic cancer research. I realize that I have probably missed your next deadline, but my lab is currently doing a series of experiments that have direct relevance to the lung cancer problem and we would be interested in any future funding opportunities. We have recently found that the retinoic acid receptor beta gene is abberantly expressed in a high percentage (about 60%) of human lung cancer cell lines, as well as several primary tumors. This abnormal expression is, at least in some cases, accompanied by alterations in the structure of the gene. Since RAR-beta is located in a region of chromosome 3 known to be deleted in a high percentage of lung cancers, our results are consistent with the possibility that RAR beta is the target (or one target) of these deletions. In any event, since retinoids are known to play an important role in the induction and maintenance of normal epithelial cell differentiation, it seems likely that the alterations in RAR beta expression which we have found play an important role in the pathophysiology of lung cancer.

If you think that our research is of potential interest to your organization, please let me know how to apply for funding.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

*Benjamin G. Neel*

Benjamin G. Neel M.D., Ph.D.  
Assistant Professor of Medicine  
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